

ers

# Alvin Ailey Receives Scripps Dance Award

By JENNIFER DUNNING

"I am part of Isadora Duncan," Alvin Ailey said on Sunday night, speaking from the stage of Duke University's Page Auditorium in Durham, N.C. "I am part of Martha Graham. I am part of Doris Humphrey. I am a part of Asadata Dafora. And I am part of Lester Horton, who made a boy, an 18-year-old athlete in sweat pants, feel important."

Mr. Ailey spoke at the ceremony at which he received the 1987 Samuel H. Scripps American Dance Festival Award, given for lifetime contributions to American modern dance. It was an occasion filled with memories. "I wanted to do what Lester Horton did," Mr. Ailey said, referring to the Los Angeles-based modern-dance pioneer with whom he made his debut as a dancer in 1950. "It was Lester who made me feel I could do what I wanted to do, and it was this that led me to New York."

Mr. Ailey formed his own company in 1958. Over the years, it has become known for its dynamic, highly expressive dancing and for a repertory that ranges from new postmodernist pieces to revivals of historic modern-dance pieces, with an emphasis on black culture and society. "We toured yearly, and fell apart yearly," Mr. Ailey recalled on Sunday. And always there was the problem of color. The company got more acclaim in Europe than in the United States, Mr. Ailey said. There was little opportunity in America for black dancers, who were seen as historically inaccurate by even sympathetic observers like Agnes de Mille.

"There have been those who doubted our validity in the past because we're black and they thought we were jazz," Mr. Ailey continued. "Sure, I like jazz, gospel and blues, but I also like Berg and Schoenberg and Reich. I like Bartok, Glass and musique concrète. I don't want to be caged by my color." And so the Scripps award — given previously to Miss Graham, Merce Cunningham, Paul Taylor, Hanya Holm, Alwin Nikolais and Katherine Dunham — means acceptance as a major figure in American modern dance.

"I'm deeply honored by this," Mr. Ailey said. "I feel as if I have joined the ranks of modern dance at last."

## Belafonte Presents Award

Taking part in the tribute were Charles Reinhart, president of the festival; Senator Terry Sanford of North Carolina, and H. Keith H. Brody, president of Duke University. Harry Belafonte presented the award



The New York Times/Jay Anderson

Alvin Ailey after receiving award Sunday in Durham, N.C.

to Mr. Ailey, recalling his first meeting with the choreographer, when Mr. Belafonte and the Horton dancers worked on the film "Carmen Jones" in 1954.

"There I met Alvin Ailey, who was restless, forceful, energetic and a sometimes intimidating human being," the singer said on Sunday. Later the two toured in "Sing, Man, Sing," which Mr. Belafonte describes as "a rather difficult road show." "I sang and he danced," Mr. Belafonte said. "He didn't think I sang well enough, and I didn't think he danced well enough. Out of that tussling came a friendship." Putting on eyeglasses that he pretended were borrowed from Mr. Ailey, Mr. Belafonte read the citation for the award, which carries with it a cash prize of \$25,000, the largest prize given annually in the arts.

"To Alvin Ailey, dancer, teacher and choreographer, whose work is generated from the heart and powered by passion," the citation read. "He stands as a model of artistic integrity. An American informed by the black experience, Mr. Ailey's choreography presses through cultural lines and speaks a universal language. His dances, whether sassy, sad, witty or lyrical, have brought joy and a sense of purpose to people throughout the world. Alvin Ailey's consistent artistic achievements have assured him a place as a giant in the history of American modern dance."





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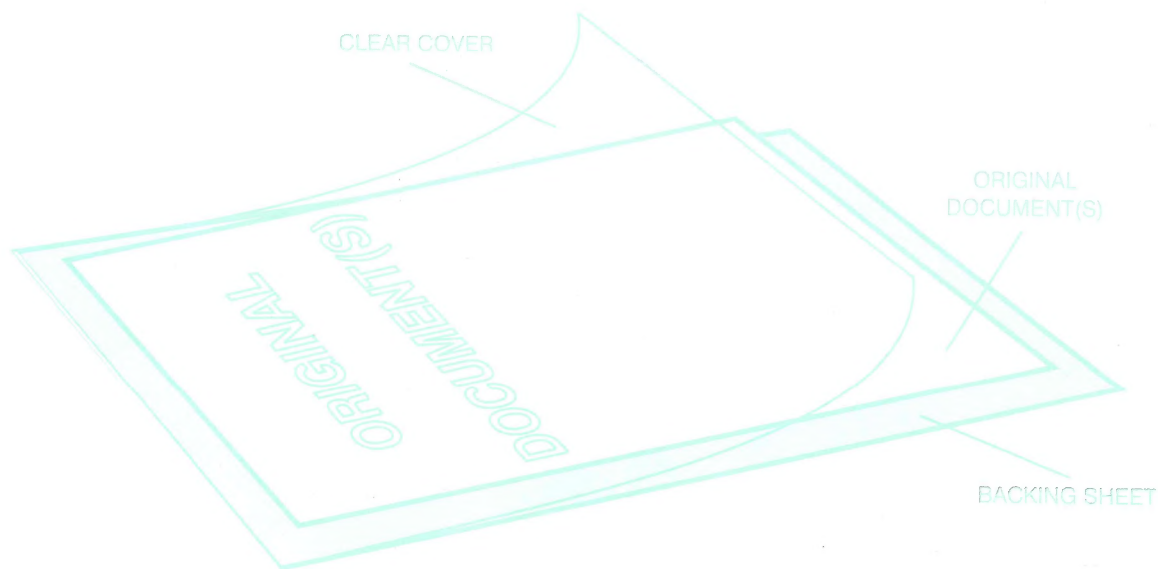
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## Dance: 'Countdown' by the Ailey

Clive Thompson Performs Company Premiere of a Four-Minute Solo Work by Rudy Perez

By CLIVE BARNES

Years and years ago, in the ice age of dance's avant-garde, a young man called Paul Taylor found notoriety, if not fame, by standing dead still on a stage and saying it was a dance. Well, it certainly wasn't a foxtrot, but then again neither was it a poem or a chicken coop.

One was reminded, at least peripherally, of this at the City Center 55th Street Theater on Friday night when the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater gave the company premiere of a solo by Rudy Perez called "Countdown." It lasted all of four minutes and was set to a couple of mildly pleasant "Songs of Auvergne." The lighting was by Kenneth Merkel and it seemed every bit as significant, and almost as active, as the choreography by Mr. Perez.

"Countdown" opens on a bare stage occupied by an empty chair. The chair is caught in criss-crossed spotlights. In front of the chair is an object that could be a glass ashtray. The lights go out. They go up again. Sitting in the chair is a man smoking a cigarette. You see it is an ashtray! The man is dressed in orange.

He smokes his cigarette. He looks very intense. He blows smoke out of his nostrils, after raising the cigarette to his lips. This, I suppose, might be termed part one of the ballet. Now he stubs out his cigarette. He also slowly rises from the chair, without moving his feet. This is part two. It is also the end.

The work is performed by Clive Thompson, who shows the most remarkable control—muscular control, and simple self-control at not revealing any anger at being involved in such

bosh. He also reveals the intensity of his stage presence; if anyone could be impressive in such a pointless exercise then Mr. Thompson is among that elect. One notes that the work was first choreographed in 1966; Why did Mr. Ailey wait so long to add it to his repertoire? We could have had it years ago.

The program opened with Mr. Ailey's own hardy perennial "Blues Suite," which will always be fun, and I particularly enjoyed Estelle Spurlock and Elbert Watson in "Blackwater Blues," and Dudley Williams leading "Sham."

The evening ended with Donald McKayle's "Blood Memories," a work new last year, which preceded Arthur Hiley's "Roots," but also deals, through the symbol of three rivers, the Nile, the Mississippi and the Harlem, with the evolutionary tree of black America.

In many respects the ballet, with its wide spectrum of choreographic invention and ethnic imagination, is most impressive, but, just as when it was new, it goes on far too long. Mr. McKayle should seriously consider cutting a work that makes a serious statement and is full of powerful and evocative dancing.

Mr. Williams, playing quite a few roles, from priest, to gambler, to prophet, is excellent, as is Mr. Thompson, who gets a chance at last to do what he really does best: move. Carl Paris and Jodi Mocca are touching in a sad little urban love duet, and, in the central role originally made for Judith Jamison, Donna Wood proves svelte and passionate. She is becoming, with her classical line and smooth articulation, a most interesting and satisfying dancer.

## Latin Art Song Heart of Recital By Eva de la O

By JOHN ROCKWELL

Eva de la O's song recital Friday night at Carnegie Recital Hall amounted to a mini-survey of Latin music in this century, with works by composers from eight countries. It was represented twice, might expect such a variety. But some of the songs—such as "Songs of Auvergne"—were those of the past, in their folk

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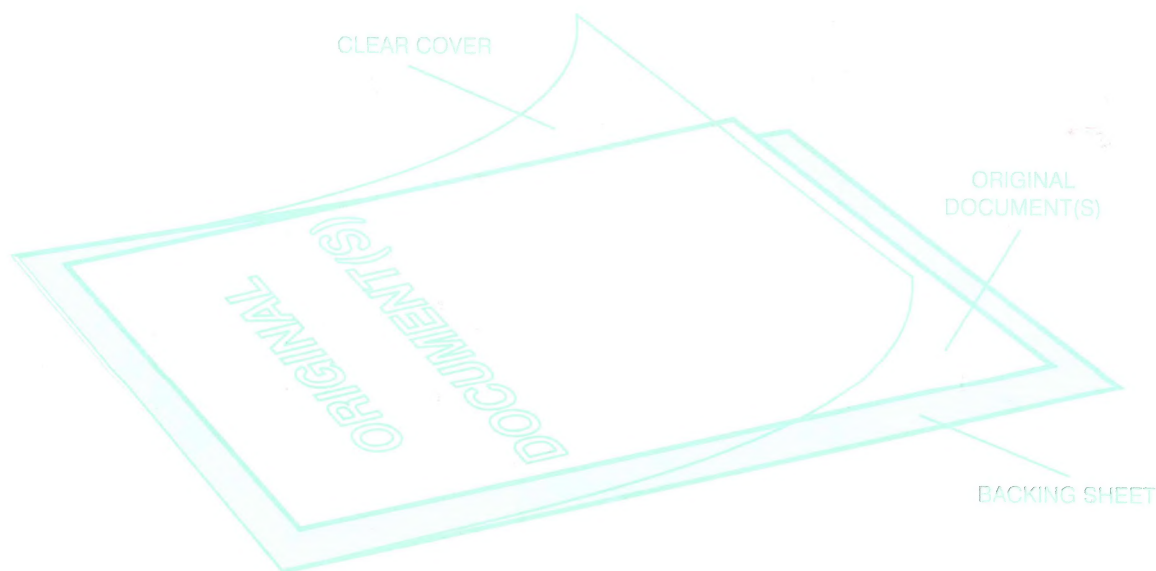
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# Choreography by Alvin Ailey

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The following is a list, year by year, of the dances created by Alvin Ailey:

## 1953-54

According to St. Francis  
Mourning Morning  
Creation of the World  
Work Dances

## 1958

Ode and Homage  
Blues Suite  
Ariette Oubliée  
Cinco Latinos

## 1959

Sonera

## 1960

African Holiday (revue)  
Revelations  
Gillespiana  
Knoxville: Summer of 1915

## 1961

Modern Jazz Suite  
Roots of the Blues

## 1962

Hermit Songs  
Been Here and Gone  
Feast of Ashes  
Reflections in D  
Miss Julie

## 1963

Labyrinth  
Rivers, Streams, Doors  
Light  
The Blues Ain't  
My Mother, My Father

## 1964

The Twelve Gates

## 1965

Ariadne

## 1966

Macumba  
El Amor Brujo  
Antony & Cleopatra (opera)

## 1967

Riedaiglia

## 1968

Quintet

## 1969

Masekela Langage

## 1970

Streams  
Gymnopedies  
The River

## 1971

Flowers  
Archipelago  
Choral Dances  
Cry  
Mary Lou's Mass  
Myth

## The Mingus Dances

Mass (Bernstein)  
The River (additions and  
revisions)

## 1972

The Lark Ascending  
Shaken Angels  
Lord Byron (opera)  
Love Songs  
Sea Change  
A Song for You  
Carmen (opera)

## 1973

4 Saints in 3 Acts (opera)  
Hidden Rites

## 1974

Ailey Celebrates Ellington  
(for television):  
Such Sweet Thunder  
Night Creature  
The Mooche  
The Blues Ain't  
Sonnet for Caesar  
Sacred Concert

## 1975

Night Creature (stage version)  
The Mooche (stage version)

## 1976

Black, Brown & Beige  
Three Black Kings  
Pas de Duke



Ailey

THE COMPANY. . .

To elevate the spirit of man; to celebrate the beauty of mankind; its roots germinating in Black America, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has today evolved into a multi-racial company that is a reflection of America at its best.

Mr. Ailey is dedicated to providing a climate in which dancers, choreographers, designers and teachers can develop. In addition, through the incorporation of works by Talley Beatty, John Butler, Lester Horton, Donald McKayle and George Faison, among others, he seeks to provide an historical perspective of the dance - a composite repertory which is, in his words, "Making one arm of ourselves a museum of classic American works." In the final analysis, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater hopes to leave behind a multi-racial institution of dance reportory that preserves and transmits the essence of American dance and bulture.

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater was officially launched in March, 1958 at the YMHA's Kaufmann Auditorium. Since then, the company has grown from 7 to 24 dancers, and has won national and international fame on the stage and on television. Its tours of colleges, its participation in this country's major arts festivals, plus international tours which have taken the company to virtually every European country, to Australia, Israel, Africa and the Soviet Union, have added not only to the prestige of Mr. Ailey and his company but to that of American dance in general.

The six-week Russian tour in the fall of '70 - the first by an American contemporary dance company - was overwhelmingly successful, as were later seasons at London's Sadler's Wells Theatre and Paris' Theatre Champs Elysees and Palais des Sports.

On several trips abroad the company has represented the United States State Department, including visits to nine East and West African countries in 1967. In 1966, it represented the United States at the first World Festival of Negro Arts at Dakar, Senegal.

In 1971 the company's successful launching of the American Dance Marathon at New York's ANTA Theater prompted Norman Singer, Executive Director of City Center of Music & Drama, Inc., to present the company at City Center. Most recently, the Company appeared at Kennedy Center for the Inaugural Eve Gala Performance.

The American Dance Center is the official school of the Alvin Ailey City Center Dance Theater, and the home of the Repertory Workshop, young dancers who perform part of the standard Ailey repertory and works produced just for them.



ALVIN AILEY was brought from a small Texas town to Los Angeles by his mother when he was eleven years old. While a student of Romance Languages at UCLA, he was introduced to basic training in dance at the Lester Horton Theater. Horton, who was considered a pioneering choreographer, was ~~never~~ devoted to the development of Black dancers. Following Mr. Horton's death in 1953, Mr. Ailey headed the Horton Company both as choreographer and as Artistic Director.

A growing desire to explore modern dance and ballet techniques more fully brought him to New York to study with Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Karel Shook, Charles Weidman and Hanya Holm. Because of Mr. Ailey's awareness of the inter-relationship of all of the performing arts, he also studied acting with Stella Adler and Milton Katselas.

Mr. Ailey appeared in the motion pictures Carmen Jones and Lydia Bailey, and was featured as leading dancer in the Broadway musical House of Flowers; in Harry Belafonte's Sing, Man, Sing; in the Phoenix Theater's production, The Carefree Tree; and in the Lena Horne Broadway musical Jamaica. As an actor, Mr. Ailey has appeared off-Broadway in Call Me By My Rightful Name and Two by Saroyan, and in 1962 made his Broadway acting debut as Claudie McNeil's son in Tiger, Tiger, Burning Bright.

In addition to directing and choreographing for his own company, Alvin Ailey has made ballets for several other prominent dance organizations: Feast of Ashes for the Joffrey Ballet; Ariadne, El Amor Brujo and Macumba for the Harkness Ballet; and The River for American Ballet Theatre. He choreographed the Samuel Barber opera Antony and Cleopatra, which opened the new Metropolitan Opera House in 1965 and the Leonard Bernstein Mass, which opened the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 1972. Mr. Ailey was the recipient of a Dance Magazine Award in 1975.

In January of this year, Mr. Ailey received the prestigious Spingarn Medal, awarded annually by the NAACP.

MARY BARNETT is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music and has also studied with Marcel Marceau, Etienne Decroux in Paris, and Martha Graham. She has taught at the Martha Graham School, Connecticut College Dance Festival, Dance Theater of Harlem, and extensively in Europe, Israel and Africa. Ms. Barnett has been a USIS Grantee to tour Africa and the Middle East, and has performed with the Martha Graham Company, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Donald McKayle, Lar Lubovitch, on Broadway and TV. She has also choreographed for the stage in the U.S. and Europe. Ms. Barnett joined the Company in October, 1976 as Rehearsal Director.



## About the Artists

CHARLES ADAMS was in an amateur production of *Roar of the Greasepaint*...when a dancing teacher, in his native Washington, D.C. talked him into taking classes. He left college after one year to study professionally with the D.C. Repertory Company. On a dare one day he telephoned Alvin Ailey and asked for an audition - that's all it took.

SARITA ALLEN, a native of Seattle, Washington, began performing in recital halls as a child. This did not inhibit her participation on the high school's track, gymnastics, and swimming teams. She came to the Ailey Company from its Repertory Workshop TV production *Ailey Celebrates Ellington*.

MARLA BINGHAM (~~Bourne~~, Mass.) broke the Massachusetts State record for high school distance runner before she decided her future was in the dance world. She studied with both Joffrey Ballet and Pennsylvania Ballet Company. Joined Company in January, 1977.

ENID BRITTEN attended weekly ballet classes in her native Philadelphia. By the time she was 16 years old she had set her course for a career in dance. After studying in New York she returned to Philadelphia and danced for two years with the Pennsylvania Ballet. She has also appeared with Lar Lubovitch's company.

AL STAIR BUTLER (~~Bahamas~~) made his professional debut with the New Breed Dance Company in Nassau, Bahamas. In New York he has appeared with the companies of Eleo Pomare and Tokunago. Joined Company in 1977.

SERGIO CAL was on the gymnastics team in high school and at the same time won a medal for his artwork. The Cuban-born performer didn't discover dance until he attended the famed North Carolina School of the Arts.

MASAZUMI CHAYA studied classical ballet in his native Japan. He came to New York in December 1970 and joined the Company in July, 1972. In Japan he was constantly performing on TV, both musical and dramatic programs. He has also done summer stock in New England.

ULYSSES DOVE became interested in dance while a pre-med student at Howard University. He won a scholarship to the University of Wisconsin School of Dance, then went on to graduate from Bennington College. Before joining the Ailey Company he was a member of the companies of Pearl Lang and Mary Anthony.

JUDITH JAMISON, a native of Philadelphia, made her New York debut in Agnes de Mille's *The Four Marys*. Miss Jamison has danced with the Ailey company since 1965 and with American Ballet Theater, The Harkness Ballet and at the Swedish Royal Opera House. She has been a recipient of the Dance Magazine Award and was appointed to the Board of The National Council on the Arts.

MELVIN JONES made his professional debut in San Francisco with the Contemporary Dance Company. While a student at North Carolina Central University he won a dance scholarship. Before joining the Ailey Company in 1973 he had worked as a clothing salesman, postal clerk and a teacher for the project Head Start.

MARI KAJIWARA graduated with honors from the High School of Performing Arts after which she became a member of the Norman Walker Dance Company. She has toured the United States and Europe with Glen Tetley and since 1970 has been a leading member of the Ailey company.

DIANNE MARONEY studied at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center and has danced with the Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble. She received her early dance training from Thaddeus Hayes and Inez Howard of the Norfolk State College Dance Theater. Joined the Company in 1977.



JODI MOCCIA, a graduate of the High School of Performing Arts, first performed choreography by Alvin Ailey when she appeared in Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*, directed by Mr. Ailey for the mini-Metropolitan Opera. You can see Ms. Moccia on your home screen on several TV commercials.

MICHIHIKO OKA graduated from Nihon University with a degree in art. His first theatrical appearance was in the Azuma Ballet Company production of *Swan Lake*. During the four years before he left his native Japan he appeared with the Nishimo Ballet Company and on the stage and TV.

CARL PARIS didn't start to study dance until college. His first teacher was Olatunji. Within a short period of time he began making appearances with the companies of Martha Graham, Eleo Pomare, Pearl Lang, Mary Anthony and Olatunji's African Dance Company. He has also been seen on the strawhat circuit in *Bye, Bye Birdie* and *Finian's Rainbow*.

BETH SHORTER was about to follow in her father's footsteps as an educator when she attended Barnard College. But the native New Yorker's four years at the High School of Performing Arts won out - and here she is with the Ailey Company. She has been the recipient of the High School of Performing Arts Dance Award and the B'nai Brith Dance Award.

MICHELE SIMMONS joined the Company in 1977, after assisting Donald McKayle on *Blood Memories*. A graduate of the High School of Performing Arts, she received her early training from Bernice Johnson. In addition to dancing with the companies of Talley Beatty, George Faison and Donald McKayle, her choreographic credits include works for Bernice Johnson, Fred Benjamin and the Barbados Dance Theater Company.

WARREN SPEARS studied dance at the Juilliard School of Dance. He was formerly a student of piano. He joined the Company in 1974.

ESTELLE SPURLOCK answers all questions about what made her become a dancer with three little words - "Born To Be." A graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music with a B.F.A. in Dance, Miss Spurlock has also been the recipient of three first prizes in the Elks Talent Contest. Her first professional appearance was with the Ailey Company in the Leonard Bernstein *Mass* at the Kennedy Center.

CLIVE THOMPSON has won international acclaim in the companies of Martha Graham, Talley Beatty, Yuriko and Katherine Dunham. This spring he gave his second command performance before the British Royal Family in his native Jamaica. In the fall he will be seen on Sesame Street, with his children. Mr. Thompson has taught in companies across the United States and in Europe. He has choreographed for several TV shows.

MARVIN TUNNEY has danced with Donald McKayle's Inner City Repertory Dance Company, Alvin Ailey Repertory Workshop, and most recently, Joyce Trisler's Danscompany. He joined the Company in 1976.



ELBERT WATSON was an award-winning high school student in Norfolk when he observed a school dance class that looked like such fun that he joined it. He was majoring in history and government at Norfolk State College when he decided to become a professional dancer. He has also appeared in leading roles in summer stock.

DUDLEY WILLIAMS has been a leading dancer with the company since 1964. A graduate of the High School of Performing Arts, he received scholarships to Juilliard and Metropolitan Opera Ballet School. He has appeared with the companies of Martha Graham, Donald McKayle and Talley Beatty, and on television in the United States and abroad.

DONNA WOOD never had intentions of becoming anything but a dancer. She began studying ballet as a child and later performed with the Dayton Contemporary Dance Company and the Dayton Ballet Company, before joining the Ailey Company.

PETER WOODIN was an anthropology major at Wesleyan University when he became interested in dance. Before starting his professional career, he worked as a forest fire fighter, a wildlife researcher and went on archeological expeditions. He danced with Lucas Hoving before becoming an Ailey dancer.

TINA YUAN was trained in classical Chinese dance and ballet in her native Taiwan. She has danced in the companies of Pearl Lang and Yuriko. Artistic Director of the Chinese Dance Company of New York, Miss Yuan joined the Ailey company in the summer of 1972. This summer Tina and her husband Rick Ornellas took their own company on a tour of the far east.



